

WAC 296-62-051, Ergonomics

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PART 1

WAC 296-62-05101 What is the purpose of this rule?

The purpose of this rule is to reduce employee exposure to specific workplace hazards that can cause or aggravate work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs). In workplaces where these hazards exist, employers must reduce them. Doing so will prevent WMSDs such as tendinitis, carpal tunnel syndrome and low back disorders. The rule is not designed to prevent injuries from slips, trips, falls, motor vehicle accidents or being struck by or caught in objects.

This rule contains three parts.

- Part 1, WAC 296-62-05105, provides a quick way for employers to know if they are covered.
- Part 2 requires covered employers to meet an employee-education requirement and identify WMSD hazards. If hazards exist, the employer must reduce them.
- Part 3 shows covered employers when they must comply with this rule. An employer's type of business and number of employees determine how much time is permitted for compliance (3 to 6 years for fixing WMSD hazards).

The rule does not include any requirements for the medical management of WMSDs or change any requirements for handling industrial insurance claims. An employer will not be in violation of this rule solely because an employee develops a WMSD or related symptom.

WAC 296-62-05103 Which employers are covered by this rule?

Employers with "caution zone jobs" are covered by this rule. A "caution zone job" is a job where an employee's typical work activities include any of the specific physical risk factors listed in WAC 296-62-05105.

WAC 296-62-05105 What is a "caution zone job"?

"Caution zone"

A "caution zone job" is a job where an employee's typical work activities include any of the specific physical risk factors listed below. Typical work activities are those that are a regular and foreseeable part of the job and occur on more than one day per week, and more frequently than one week per year.

- Employers having one or more "caution zone jobs" must comply with Part 2 of this rule. "Caution zone jobs" may not be hazardous, but do require further evaluation.
- This rule does not prohibit "caution zone jobs."
- Employers who have made a reasonable determination that they do not have "caution zone jobs" are not covered by this rule.
- Duration (for example, 2 hours) refers to the total amount of time per day employees are exposed to the risk factor, not how long they spend performing the work activity that includes the risk factor.

Awkward Posture

- (1) Working with the hand(s) above the head, or the elbow(s) above the shoulder, more than 2 hours total per day
- (2) Working with the neck or back bent more than 30 degrees (without support and without the ability to vary posture) more than 2 hours total per day
- (3) Squatting more than 2 hours total per day
- (4) Kneeling more than 2 hours total per day

High Hand Force

- (5) Pinching an unsupported object(s) weighing 2 or more pounds per hand, or pinching with a force of 4 or more pounds per hand, more than 2 hours total per day (comparable to pinching half a ream of paper)
- (6) Gripping an unsupported object(s) weighing 10 or more pounds per hand, or gripping with a force of 10 or more pounds per hand, more than 2 hours total per day (comparable to clamping light duty automotive jumper cables onto a battery)

Highly Repetitive Motion

- (7) Repeating the same motion with the neck, shoulders, elbows, wrists, or hands (excluding keying activities) with little or no variation every few seconds more than 2 hours total per day
- (8) Performing intensive keying more than 4 hours total per day

Repeated Impact

- (9) Using the hand (heel/base of palm) or knee as a hammer more than 10 times per hour more than 2 hours total per day

Heavy, Frequent or Awkward Lifting

- (10) Lifting objects weighing more than 75 pounds once per day or more than 55 pounds more than 10 times per day
- (11) Lifting objects weighing more than 10 pounds if done more than twice per minute more than 2 hours total per day
- (12) Lifting objects weighing more than 25 pounds above the shoulders, below the knees or at arms length more than 25 times per day

Moderate to High Hand-Arm Vibration

- (13) Using impact wrenches, carpet strippers, chain saws, percussive tools (jack hammers, scalers, riveting or chipping hammers) or other hand tools that typically have high vibration levels more than 30 minutes total per day
- (14) Using grinders, sanders, jig saws or other hand tools that typically have moderate vibration levels more than 2 hours total per day

(Employers may assume that hand tools vibrating less than 2.5 meters per second squared (m/s^2) eight-hour equivalent are not covered.)

PART 2

WAC 296-62-05110 When do employers' existing ergonomics activities comply with this rule?

Employers may continue to use effective alternative methods established before this rule's adoption date. If used, the employer must be able to demonstrate that the alternative methods, taken as a whole, are as effective as the requirements of this rule in reducing the WMSD hazards of each job and providing for employee education, training and participation.

WAC 296-62-05120 Which employees must receive ergonomics awareness education and when?

- (1) Employers must ensure that all employees working in or supervising "caution zone jobs" receive ergonomics awareness education at least once every three years. The employer may provide ergonomics awareness education or may rely on education provided by another employer or organization. Ergonomics awareness education materials provided by the department of labor and industries may be used to meet these requirements.
- (2) When employees are assigned to work in or supervise "caution zone jobs," they must receive ergonomics awareness education within 30 calendar days, unless they have received it in the past three years. This requirement applies when the initial "awareness education" deadline in the implementation schedule (WAC 296-62-05160) has passed.

WAC 296-62-05122 What must be included in ergonomics awareness education?

Ergonomics awareness education (for example: Oral presentations, videos, computer-based presentations, or written materials with discussion) must include:

- Information on work-related causes of musculoskeletal disorders, including all caution zone risk factors listed in WAC 296-62-05105 (nonwork factors may be included as well);
- The types, symptoms and consequences of WMSDs and the importance of early reporting;
- Information on identifying WMSD hazards and common measures to reduce them; and
- The requirements of this ergonomics rule.

WAC 296-62-05130 What options do employers have for analyzing and reducing WMSD hazards?

All covered employers must determine whether “caution zone jobs” have WMSD hazards and must reduce the WMSD hazards identified as described below.

Employers may choose either the General Performance Approach or the Specific Performance Approach as follows :

WAC 296-62-05130 - Analyzing and reducing WMSD hazards: General Performance Approach	WAC 296-62-05130 - Analyzing and reducing WMSD hazards: Specific Performance Approach
(1) The employer must analyze “caution zone jobs” to identify those with WMSD hazards that must be reduced. A WMSD hazard is a physical risk factor that by itself or in combination with other physical risk factors has a sufficient level of intensity, duration or frequency to cause a substantial risk of WMSDs. The employer must use hazard control levels as effective as the recommended levels in widely used methods such as the Job Strain Index, the lifting guidelines in the Department of Energy ErgoEASER, the ANSI S3.34-1986 (R1997) Hand Arm Vibration Standards, the 1991 NIOSH Lifting Equation, (as described in Waters 1993), the UAW-GM Risk Factor Checklists, applicable ACGIH threshold limit values for physical agents, Rapid Entire Body Assessment (REBA), or Rapid Upper Limb Assessment (RULA).	(1) The employer must analyze “caution zone jobs” to identify those with WMSD hazards that must be reduced. A WMSD hazard is a physical risk factor that exceeds the criteria in Appendix B of this rule.
(2) The employer must analyze "caution zone jobs" using a systematic method that includes the following, if applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical demands specific to the worksite including posture, force, repetition, repeated impacts, hand-arm vibration, duration, work pace, task variability and recovery time; Layout of the work area, including reaches, working heights, seating and surfaces; and Manual handling requirements, including size, shape, weight, and packaging. 	(2) Same as General Performance Approach
(3) Individuals responsible for hazard analysis must know how to use the analysis method effectively and be informed about the requirements of this rule.	(3) Individuals responsible for hazard analysis must know how to use the analysis provided in Appendix B effectively and be informed about the requirements of this rule.
(4) The employer must reduce all WMSD hazards below the criteria chosen in WAC 296-62-05130(1) or to the degree technologically and economically feasible.	(4) The employer must reduce all WMSD hazards below the criteria in Appendix B of this rule or to the degree technologically and economically feasible.

WAC 296-62-05130 –Analyzing and reducing WMSD hazards: General Performance Approach (cont.)	WAC 296-62-05130 - Analyzing and reducing WMSD hazards: Specific Performance Approach (cont.)
<p>(5) Employers must reduce WMSD hazards as described below by:</p> <p>(a) Implementing controls that do not rely primarily on employee behavior to reduce WMSD hazards, such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to workstations and tools • Reducing the size and weights of loads handled • Process redesign to eliminate unnecessary steps or introduce task variety • Job rotation <p>(b) If employers cannot reduce WMSD hazards below the hazard level using the controls identified above, they must supplement those controls with interim measures that primarily rely on individual work practices or personal protective equipment. Examples of such practices include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact gloves • Team lifting • Training on work techniques <p>(c) This rule does not require an employer to control WMSD hazards by replacing full-time employees with part-time employees or otherwise reducing an individual’s hours of employment. If an employer has implemented all other technologically and economically feasible controls, and a WMSD hazard remains, the employer will be deemed in compliance with this subsection.</p>	<p>(5) Same as General Performance Approach</p>
<p>(6) If measures to reduce WMSD hazards include changes in the job or work practices then job-specific training must be provided. This job-specific training must include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The hazards of the work activities; • Safe work practices; and • The proper use and maintenance of specific measures to reduce WMSD hazards that have been implemented. 	<p>(6) Same as General Performance Approach</p>
<p>(7) No written ergonomics program is required. The employer must be able to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The method used to analyze “caution zone jobs”; • The criteria used to identify WMSD hazards; • The jobs with identified WMSD hazards; and • The reduction of all WMSD hazards below the criteria chosen in WAC 296-62-05130(1) or to the degree technologically and economically feasible. 	<p>(7) No written ergonomics program is required. The employer must be able to demonstrate that all WMSD hazards have been reduced below the criteria identified in Appendix B of this rule or to the degree technologically and economically feasible.</p>

WAC 296-62-05140 How must employees be kept involved and informed?

- (1) The employer must provide for and encourage employee participation in analyzing “caution zone jobs” and selecting measures to reduce WMSD hazards. Employers with eleven or more employees who are required to have safety committees (WAC 296-24-045) must involve this committee in choosing the methods to be used for employee participation.
- (2) Employers with eleven or more employees must share the following information with the safety committee (if a committee is required by WAC 296-24-045). Employers who are not required to have a safety committee (WAC 296-24-045) must provide this information at safety meetings:
 - The requirements of this rule;
 - Identified “caution zone jobs”;
 - Results of the hazard analysis and/or identification of jobs with WMSD hazards; and
 - Measures to reduce WMSD hazards.
- (3) The employer must review its ergonomics activities at least annually for effectiveness and for any needed improvements. This review must include members of the safety committee where one exists or ensure an equally effective means of employee involvement.

WAC 296-62-05150 How are terms and phrases used in this rule?

Note: Check L&I's WISHA Services web site at <http://www.lni.wa.gov/wisha/ergo> for current links to any of the web sites referred to in this section.

ACGIH threshold limit values for physical hazards - The American Conference of Governmental Industrial Hygienists, Thresholds Limit Values for Chemical Substances and Physical Agents in the Work Environment, and Biological Exposure Indices (TLVs and BEIs). Available for purchase at the ACGIH web site at <http://www.acgih.org>.

ANSI S3.34-1986 (R1997) Hand Arm Vibration Standards - American National Standard Guide for the Measurement and Evaluation of Human Exposure to Vibration Transmitted to the Hand. ANSI S3.34-1986 (R1997). Available for purchase at the ANSI web site at <http://web.ansi.org/default.htm>.

“Caution zone jobs” - Jobs where an employee’s typical work activities include any of the specific physical risk factors identified in WAC 296-62-05105. These jobs have a sufficient degree of risk to require ergonomics awareness education and job hazard analysis.

Department of Energy ErgoEASER - Ergonomics Education, Awareness, System Evaluation and Recording (ErgoEASER) software package. U. S. Department of Energy, Office of Environment, Safety, and Health (1995). Can be downloaded from the Department of Energy web site at <http://tis.eh.doe.gov/others/ergoeaser/download.htm>.

Ergonomics – The science and practice of designing jobs or workplaces to match the capabilities and limitations of the human body.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE) – The equivalent of one person working full-time for one year (2,000 worker hours per year). For example, two persons working half time count as one FTE.

WAC 296-62-05150 (Cont.)

High Hand-Arm Vibration Levels - Tools with vibration values equal to or greater than 10 meters per second squared (m/s^2) eight-hour equivalent. Examples include some impact wrenches, carpet strippers, chain saws, and percussive tools.

Intensive Keying – Keying with the hands or fingers in a rapid, steady motion with few opportunities for temporary work pauses.

Job Strain Index - The Strain Index: A proposed method to analyze jobs for risk of distal upper extremity disorders, Moore, J.S., and A. Garg, (1995). Published in American Industrial Hygiene Association Journal, volume 56, pages 443-458. Web site at <http://sg-www.satx.disa.mil/hscemo/tools/strain.htm>.

Moderate Hand-Arm Vibration Levels – Tools with vibration values between 2.5 and 10 meters per second squared (m/s^2) eight-hour equivalent. Examples include some grinders, sanders, and jig saws.

NIOSH Lifting Equation, 1991 – Waters, T.R., Putz-Anderson, V., Garg, A., and Fine, L.J. (1993). Revised NIOSH equation for the design and evaluation of manual lifting tasks. Published in Ergonomics, volume 36 (7), pages 749-776. For a manual on using the lifting equation see: Applications Manual for Revised Lifting Equation, Waters, T., Putz-Anderson, V., Garg, A. (1994). Available from the National Technical Information Center (NTIS), Springfield, VA 22161. 1-800-553-6847.

Calculator web site at <http://www.industrialhygiene.com/calc/lift.html>.

Application guideline web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/94-110.html>.

Rapid Entire Body Assessment tool (REBA) - Hignett, S. and McAtamney, L. (2000) Rapid entire body assessment (REBA). Published in Applied Ergonomics volume 31, pages 201-205.

Recovery Time – Work periods with light task demands, or rest breaks, that permit an employee to recover from physically demanding work.

The Rapid Upper Limb Assessment (RULA) - McAtamney, L. and Corlett, E.N. (1993) RULA: A survey method for the investigation of work-related upper limb disorders. Published in Applied Ergonomics, volume 24 (2), pages 91-99.

UAW-GM Risk Factor Checklists - UAW-GM Risk Factor Checklist 2, 1998. UAW-GM (United Auto Workers-General Motors), Center for Human Resources, Health and Safety Center, 1030 Doris Road, Auburn Hills, Michigan.

Work Activities – The physical demands, exertions, or functions of the job or task.

Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs) – Work-related disorders that involve soft tissues such as muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, blood vessels and nerves. Examples include: Muscle strains and tears, ligament sprains, joint and tendon inflammation, pinched nerves, degeneration of spinal discs, carpal tunnel syndrome, tendinitis, rotator cuff syndrome. For purposes of this rule WMSDs do not include injuries from slips, trips, falls, motor vehicle accidents or being struck by or caught in objects.

PART 3

WAC 296-62-05160 When must employers comply with this rule?

Employers covered by this rule must comply with its requirements by the dates shown.

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE		
Employer	Awareness Education Completed And Hazard Analysis Completed	Hazard Reduction Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All employers in SIC codes* 078, 152, 174, 175, 176, 177, 242, 421, 451, 541, 805, and 836 who employ 50 or more annual full time equivalents (FTEs) in Washington state The Washington State Department of Labor & Industries 	July 1, 2002	July 1, 2003
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The remaining employers in SIC codes* 078, 152, 174, 175, 176, 177, 242, 421, 451, 541, 805 and 836 All other employers who employ 50 or more annual full time equivalents (FTEs) in Washington state 	July 1, 2003	July 1, 2004
All other employers employing 11-49 annual full time equivalents (FTEs) in Washington state	July 1, 2004	July 1, 2005
All other employers employing 10 or fewer annual full time equivalents (FTEs) in Washington state	July 1, 2005	July 1, 2006
SUPPLEMENTAL IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE		
New workplaces or businesses	One year from the date the new workplace or business is established OR According to the schedule above	15 months from the date the new workplace or business is established OR According to the schedule above
Significant changes to existing workplaces or businesses	2 months after significant changes occur OR According to the schedule above	3 months after significant changes occur OR According to the schedule above

**Note: SIC code is the employer's primary SIC based on hours of employment. See Appendix C of this rule for descriptions of these SIC codes.*

Note: Help for employers in implementing the rule.

(1) Developing Ergonomics Guides and Models

The department will work with employer and employee organizations to develop guides for complying with this rule (for example, a model program for ergonomics awareness education). Employer use of these guides will be optional.

(2) Identifying Industry “Best Practices”

The department will work with employer and employee organizations to develop or identify methods of reducing WMSD hazards that will serve as examples of industry-specific “best practices.” As industry-specific “best practices” are developed, they may be used to demonstrate employer compliance with the requirement to reduce WMSD hazards. Employers will not be restricted to the use of industry “best practices” for compliance.

(3) Establishing Inspection Policies and Procedures

The department will develop policies and procedures for inspections and enforcement of this rule before the rule is enforced. These policies and procedures will be communicated to employers and employees through mailing lists, business associations, labor unions and other methods before the department issues any citations or penalties.

(4) Conducting Demonstration Projects

Following adoption of this rule, the department will work with employers and employees to undertake demonstration projects to test and improve guidelines, “best practices” and inspection policies and procedures as they are developed.

(5) Providing Information on Ergonomics

The department will work with employer and employee organizations to collect and share the most effective examples of ergonomics training, job analysis, and specific solutions to problems. The department will make special efforts to share this information with the small business community.